THE WILDS OF MIAMI ARE CALLING
AND NO, WE DON'T MEAN NIGHTLIFE {page 15}

MEDS TO ORDER
CITY DEBATES CLINIC RULES
{page 4}

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Ontario

LONDON metro®
Wednesday, February 29, 2012
www.metronews.ca
News worth sharing.

London job outlook is 'weak,' economist says

Forest City lagging other urban centres in job prospects Nationwide, 2,300 jobs were created in January, report says

ANGELA MULLINS
@METRONEWS.CA

Three people are in line for every job opening in London.

That's the gist of a new Conference Board of Canada report that shows Forest City as one of only two Ontario cities where employment prospects are down (St. Catharines-Niagara is the other). The number of job openings has been steadily declining since late last year, the report shows.

"Confidence is down in London and you see that translated into (fewer) job advertisements," said economist Alan Arcand, author of the report.

Simply put: "I would characterize the London labour market as weak."

The report hardly comes as news to Dorothy Nauss, a resource specialist at the London Employment Centre's Northland Mall branch. While the office walls are practically lined with advertisements for openings, the quality of available jobs started tumbling several years ago and continues to spiral downward, Nauss said.

"Also, the pay. Money is really bad," Nauss said Tuesday. "It's minimum-wage-type jobs, service industry. That's all we have. Everything else is out of town. When a manufacturing job comes up, it's just flooded."

ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

▶ Edgar Budigi, 25, checks out job listings at the London Employment Help Centre.

10 The number of metropolitan areas nationwide where job prospects are declining, according to the Conference Board of Canada.

The Conference Board of Canada ranks job prospects in metropolitan areas by analyzing the number of positions posted on 79 job boards across the country.

London has been in the doldrums for some time, while Toronto, Hamilton, Windsor and Kitchener are beginning to pull out of slumps, the report shows.

But Arcand said Londoners might want to prepare for an "uptick" when February data are released next week. The city's unemployment rate, which includes St. Thomas, fell to nine per cent from 9.6 between December and January.

ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

▶ Maria LeBreton, an administrative assistant at the London Employment Help Centre in Northland Mall, posts job openings on Tuesday on a board inside her office. LeBreton updates the board regularly to give job seekers the best possible taste of what's available in the tight labour market.

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Ornge helicopters can't enter U.S., must rely on ambulances: Memo

The Progressive Conservatives say Ornge's new helicopters can't transport patients to the United States because they're not allowed to enter American air space.

The Opposition says the information came from a leaked government memo about the troubled air-ambulance service, which is currently under a criminal probe.

The memo notes that Ornge does have an agreement to transport patients across the border by land ambulance.

Although the leaked document indicates paperwork has been put before the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration, the Ornge helicopters have not been cleared to enter the U.S. at this time.

It also says Ornge's planes aren't affected, but they operate from northern and remote areas, such as Timmins and Sioux Lookout.

Health Minister Deb Matthews couldn't immediately confirm the information in the legislature.

That set off Tory health critic Elizabeth Witmer, who called the minister's response "unbelievable" and angrily demanded that she resign.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

▶ Health Minister Deb Matthews

116 potential Stafford-case jurors recalled as selection continues

Woodstock girl, 8, was murdered in 2009 Already a first-degree murder conviction in case

Crown and defence lawyers will begin picking a jury Wednesday from a pool of 116 people who remain following the first stage of jury selection in the trial of a man accused of killing an eight-year-old girl.

Michael Rafferty, 31, is charged with first-degree murder, sexual assault causing bodily harm and kidnapping in the death of Victoria Stafford.

Tori disappeared while on her way home from school in nearby Woodstock on April 8, 2009, and her body was found three months later.

Terri-Lynne McClintic, now 21, has already been convicted of first-degree murder in the girl's death.

Jury selection began Monday at the courthouse in London and the majority of the 447 people who went before Superior Court Judge Thomas Heeney were excused for various reasons.

Jury to visit site

During the trial, the jury is set to visit the site where Tori's body was found.

Potential jurors were told the trial is expected to last between two and a half and three months, possibly extending into June.

Rafferty's trial was moved to London from Woodstock in light of publicity surrounding the girl's death. His lawyer, Dirk Derstine, suggested outside court Monday that people should keep an open mind.

"I expect that the evidence to be called will be different than what everybody is perhaps expecting," he said.

The trial is also expected to draw extensive media coverage, so Heeney has set some ground rules. Reporters can use devices such as laptops or smartphones but won't be allowed to transmit from the courtroom.

However, a satellite courtroom will be set up for the trial, from which reporters will be allowed to electronically transmit information.

Members of the public won't be permitted to use personal electronic devices in either courtroom.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

MARK SPOWART/THE CANADIAN PRESS

▶ Dirk Derstine, lead defence counsel for Michael Rafferty, answers media questions in front of Middlesex Court House in London Monday.

1 news

An upcoming Lady Gaga visit is spurring pressure on Harvard to confer posthumous degrees on students expelled for being gay or perceived as gay. Scan code for story.

To scan 2D barcodes in Metro, download the free ScanLife app at 2dscan.com.

On the web at metronews.ca

Every four years, the universe plays a game of catch-up by adding a bonus day. Leap years explained at metronews.ca

Cancer. Awareness

▶ The London Knights' Jared Knight, left, and Greg McKegg display jerseys featuring "Colon Cancer Check" patches Tuesday at the John Labatt Centre.

ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

Knights sporting new jersey patches

The patches will be worn throughout March to promote Colon Cancer Awareness Month. The Knights teamed up with the South West Regional Cancer Program for a similar initiative in 2011. This year, the effort has spread across the province with all Ontario Hockey League teams sporting cancer-check patches in partnership with Cancer Care Ontario.

Methadone clinics will not be near youth club

Council committee OKs request that clinics be kept away from facility at 184 Horton St. Rules for new methadone clinics pass first hurdle

ANGELA MULLINS
@METRONEWS.CA

Areas around the Boys & Girls Club of London have been added to the list of places where methadone clinics would be banned under a new set of regulations up for consideration at city hall.

Members of city council's planning committee granted the organization's request for a 300-metre buffer zone around its headquarters during a Monday meeting. Coun. Bud Polhill, the committee's chairman, said more exemptions could be considered if requests are made before council has its final say on the rules March 20.

"I haven't heard any (requests) yet," he said Tuesday afternoon. "I think we've covered off most of (the appropriate places)."

Along with adding the Boys & Girls Club to the mix, committee members gave preliminary approval Monday to keep clinics away from arenas, libraries, pools, schools and the Western Fair District.

The rules, which also require adequate waiting rooms and parking, would only apply to clinics that serve 30 or more patients a day. City council's public-safety committee is expected to hear a proposal on licensing the facilities next week.

About 30 people, ranging from methadone users to drugstore representatives, had a say about the new rules during Monday's meeting, Polhill said.

The city has no guidelines governing such clinics, and officials have been grappling with the issue since a moratorium on new facilities was imposed in November 2010.

800

Approximate number of sites where methadone clinics could open under new regulations being considered by the city.

METRO FILE

▶ Bud Polhill

Grits to reshape business-grant program

SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

▶ Brad Duguid

Ontario's cash-strapped Liberal government hopes to save hundreds of millions of dollars a year by reducing grants to businesses.

The government is doing a deep review of 50 different business-support programs spread across eight different ministries, worth about $2.3 billion a year. Economic Development Minister Brad Duguid says he has not identified any specific programs or tax credits to eliminate or scale back.

But he says there will be savings from making the programs more efficient and having them all available through one office.

Duguid says the Liberals will be "quite bold" as they reshape and refocus their grants and tax credits for businesses. The Liberals say many of the support programs were introduced when Ontario's tax system was much less competitive and before the HST also reduced costs for businesses.

Economist Don Drummond recommended Ontario make a clean break from all its business-support programs and start over, but Duguid suggests they may not go that far.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

ENVIRONMENT CANADA

Freezing rain may hit London

Environment Canada has issued a special weather statement for London and much of the surrounding area, warning of the possibility of freezing rain Wednesday morning.

According to the national weather agency, a low pressure system that developed over Colorado on Tuesday morning would approach Ontario in the evening, beginning as snow over southwestern Ontario after midnight. It's expected to change to freezing rain toward Wednesday morning.

We're expecting a high of 6 C by Wednesday afternoon, mostly cloudy and 4 C on Thursday, and up to 8 C on Friday.

AM980/AM980.CA

Children's charity wins FB contest

The Make-A-Wish Foundation of Southwestern Ontario won the Siskinds LLP $5,000 Facebook Charity Challenge.

People in the London area voted 455 times for Make-A-Wish, followed by Merry Mount (386 votes) and St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation (273). The Siskinds law firm's gift will help a three-year-old London girl's wish to go to Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla.

METRO

Award goes to Rwandan program

A Rwandan initiative to end violence against women received a Breaking the Silence award from the Avon Foundation on Tuesday in Washington, D.C.

London's Shine the Light on Woman Abuse campaign, led by the London Abused Women's Centre, was among five finalists for the award.

The winning project was led by the Rwanda Women's Network.

METRO

METRO FILE

Local police get new breathing devices

The London Police Service is now in possession of four emergency breathing apparatuses. They will primarily be used when police respond to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear calls.

METRO

$21,077

The cost of the four apparatuses, which was split between police and the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program grant fund.

Toronto Gold, Silver and Diamond Buyers paying on the spot for valuables this week in London!

By David Morgan
STAFF WRITER

London area residents are in for a rare treat when the Toronto Gold, Silver and Diamond Buyers (TGSDB) host an event here **February 29th - March 4th** at the **Four Points by Sheraton**. The company has identified this region as prime territory for purchasing valuable diamonds and precious metals—especially gold and silver. The TGSDB estimates that local residents have millions of dollars worth of valuables that they no longer need or want. That is where the TGSDB comes in—they specialize in buying those items from local sellers throughout Canada.

Items like gold coins, sterling silver, tea sets and old or broken engagement rings are in high demand and are being purchased in massive quantities. Another great way to see your profits add up quickly is through selling scrap gold. This can include mismatched earrings, class rings, herringbone necklaces, etc.—anything that contains gold can dramatically raise the amount of cash you walk away with.

Currently on a national tour, TGSDB has included **London** on its list of stops for a limited engagement. Residents are urged to mark their calendar for this special opportunity to meet one-on-one with gold, silver and diamond specialists.

Because of TGSDB's low overhead, extensive resources and massive volume, the company is often able to pay out more than other dealers and retailers. Many customers are surprised at how much they are offered for seemingly small amounts. "I had two bent herringbone necklaces, a class ring, and some outdated earrings that I brought to a show. I walked out with $425 in less than 15 minutes," said a satisfied guest.

Providing an economic boost to each region it visits, the TGSDB projects to pay out $350,000 at each event—a testament to the high volume of items they purchase and the prime prices being paid. Offers are made based on rarity, collectability, condition and market value.

Company spokesman Matthew Enright says, "We just paid $4,700 for a loose 1.25 carat diamond. Our mission is to pay local residents on the spot for sterling silverware, loose diamonds, fine jewellery, coins and precious metals—especially silver and gold." The company has seen a huge influx of gold lately. "Customers have been scrambling to cash into the record high value of gold," adds Enright. For those who are unsure if their item is genuine gold or silver, or simply costume, the company will test it for free. "The best strategy is to bring all items to the show for a free evaluation by our specialists. It always amazes me how a small handful of gold and silver can turn into hundreds of dollars in just a few moments. We test and weigh items right on the spot," Enright says.

At a recent show, a small-town dentist had a nice pay day. "I have been collecting dental gold for years from patients who didn't want their extracted teeth. It really added up—my check is for over $31,000!" While most people don't have buckets of dental gold at their fingertips, they do have $750 worth of scrap gold scattered throughout their homes, according to industry specialists.

In addition to scrap gold, fine jewellery and diamonds, coins are always a big hit. Offers will be made on most coins dated 1967 and earlier—gold coins, silver dollars, half dollars, quarters, nickels and dimes. Enright explains, "Canadian coins made before 1967 are worth more than their legal tender amount because they can contain up to 92.5% silver. Rare dates and mint marks can make them even more valuable. We recently paid $78,000 for an amazing coin collection. One couple brought in a rusty coffee can filled with silver coins, sawdust, and a dead spider. The can had been in the basement for years. We were happy to send them home with a check for more than $7,000!"

London area residents should start collecting their valuables now to bring to the free event, which runs this **Wednesday - Sunday**. Offers will be made and cash will be paid on the spot. Attendance is expected to be high, but no appointment is needed. Enright encourages everyone to take advantage of this special opportunity to meet directly with specialists at the Toronto Gold, Silver and Diamond Buyers. He concludes, "It's a great chance for people to cash in their old diamonds, jewellery, coins and scrap gold. This is a seller's market. We're only here till **Sunday**, so don't miss out!"

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What We Buy:

Robocall probe leads to fake name

‘Pierre Poutine’ made calls to Edmonton-based RackNine, the Tory-linked firm at centre of scandal

Court documents show a cellphone in the robocalls affair was registered to Pierre Poutine of Separatist Street in Joliette, Que.

Elections Canada’s chief investigator says the clearly fake name was likely used to cover the tracks of whoever was behind misleading and harassing calls to voters in Guelph in the last federal election.

Voters in Guelph reported getting calls from a phone number with a 450 area code directing them to the wrong polling station.

Elections Canada investigator Al Mathews obtained phone records showing the number behind the Guelph calls was the same one registered to “Pierre Poutine.”

Tory trouble

- The market-research industry’s watchdog is launching an investigation into a Tory pollster involved in an alleged misinformation campaign against Liberal MP Irwin Cotler.
- Campaign Research was behind a phone campaign last fall in Cotler’s Montreal riding, in which constituents complained they were falsely told their MP was about to or had resigned and that a byelection was imminent.

The phone records also show the number registered to Pierre Poutine twice called Edmonton-based RackNine Inc., on April 30 and May 1.

The claims, which have not been proved in court, are laid out in an Information to Obtain a Production Order filed in an Edmonton court in November.

The records also show phones associated with Guelph Conservative candidate Marty Burke and the Guelph Conservative riding association made a total of 31 calls to RackNine between March 26 and early May.

RackNine has confirmed someone used its automated dialling service to make the phoney calls.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Report slams Tory crime bill

Restricting conditional sentences is going to cost the provinces and territories almost $140 million a year, produce fewer convictions and reduce the time offenders are under government supervision, says a report from the independent parliamentary budget officer.

The 97-page study is a detailed and devastating critique of just one small aspect of the massive Conservative omnibus crime bill that is currently before the Senate.

Not only does the report predict a massive, unreported cost to provincial and territorial treasuries, it raises serious questions about the policy’s effectiveness.

Justice Minister Rob Nicholson’s office did not directly dispute the report’s cost findings.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

CONTRIBUTED

▶ Peter Brouwer is co-founder of the Honor Society of Leap Year Day Babies.

‘LEAP DAY SHOULD BE AN OFFICIAL CELEBRATION’

Today, Peter Brouwer is celebrating his 14th birthday. No, Brouwer isn’t a precocious teenager who has overachieved in life — he’s a 56-year-old man who only gets to celebrate his birthday every four years. The Vancouver resident, like some five million others across the globe, was born on Leap Day, Feb. 29.

Brouwer set up the Honor Society of Leap Year Day Babies so that “leapers” could “share their different experiences,” and, in some cases, the frustration caused by the whimsical date.

“This day celebrates the fact that our seasons can arrive on time and in sync every year,” Brouwer says. “The irony is that leap day is, yes, a chronological anomaly, but one that makes our calendar orderly. We should celebrate this.” ANTHONY JOHNSTON/METRO WORLD NEWS

Shooting suspect’s victims random

The suspect in a school shooting that killed three students and wounded two didn’t know his victims and chose them randomly, a prosecutor said Tuesday.

Suspect T.J. Lane, 17, admitted firing 10 shots with a .22-calibre pistol Monday morning at Chardon High School, county prosecutor David Joyce said at a juvenile court hearing.

The hearing came hours after the death toll rose to three, and as schoolmates and townspeople grappled with the tragedy and wondered what could have set the gunman off.

Lane’s face twitched lightly while the prosecutor recounted the attack, and he sniffled and half-closed his eyes as he walked out of the room.

Judge Timothy Grendell ordered the boy held for at least the next 15 days. Prosecutors have until March 1 to charge him.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

MARK DUNCAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ SWAT members leave Chardon High School in Ohio after a student opened fire inside the cafeteria on Monday.

Customs, RCMP and police foil suicide

Customs agents, Mounties and city police have foiled a suicide pact that involved a car full of potentially hazardous chemicals at Winnipeg’s international airport.

Officers in the Manitoba capital say they were tipped by Mounties in British Columbia that a woman, believed to be from Europe, had just entered the country through Vancouver with the intention of meeting a 27-year-old man in Winnipeg.

Const. Jason Michalyshen said the two had met on a website and had made a suicide pact. Police locked down the Winnipeg airport late Monday night and found the man with a car full of chemicals.

The unnamed man was taken into custody and the chemicals were deemed safe by the fire department’s hazardous materials team.

No charges are pending since the two never intended to harm anyone other than themselves, Michalyshen said.

The chemicals found in the man’s car can be purchased at a hardware store, but, when combined, can produce lethal gas, he said. They were in sealed containers inside the car.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Syria's envoy makes fast exit

Denounces planned UN resolution as 'malicious and prejudiced' Then storms out of meeting room

First, he delivered a fiery speech that accused the United Nations Human Rights Council of promoting terrorism in Syria and prolonging the nation's bloodshed.

Then he stormed out of the emergency UN meeting in Geneva.

All of which earned Fayssal al-Hamwi, Syria's ambassador to the UN in Geneva, a tongue-lashing.

The United States said he demonstrated the "delusional" nature of President Bashar Assad's regime.

"I think it's a reflection to some extent of what's going on with the Assad regime itself, holding a referendum that is farcical and a mockery of democratic processes when they're in the midst of a humanitarian crisis of their own creation," said Eileen Chamberlain Donahoe, the U.S. representative to the 47-nation council.

The global body now says more than 7,500 people have died in Syria's turmoil since March.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tunisia's offer

- Tunisia's president, Moncef Marzouki, says he's ready to offer asylum to Syria's leader, Bashar Assad, in a bid to end the Syrian bloodshed.

RODRIGO ABD/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ The victims can only marvel at the debris. Their house in Sarmin, Syria, was destroyed in clashes between the Free Syrian Army and President Bashar Assad's forces on Tuesday. Residents say at least 14 people were killed.

9-11 remains sent to landfill

The Pentagon revealed Tuesday that partial, incinerated remains of some Sept. 11 victims that could not be identified were sent to a landfill.

The remains were of some of those killed when a hijacked plane struck the Pentagon, killing 184, and another crashed in a field in Pennsylvania, killing 40, in the 2001 attacks.

The Pentagon released the report by an independent committee that was asked to examine practices at the military's mortuary at Dover, Delaware, the first stopping point for fallen troops coming home from war overseas.

"We don't think it should have happened," said committee chairman retired Gen. John Abizaid.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Earlier scandal

- News reports said some cremated partial remains of at least 274 American war dead were dumped in a Virginia landfill until a policy change halted the practice in 2008.

CANADIANS ABOARD

Disabled cruise ship gets food

Helicopters ferried food and flashlights to more than 1,000 people, including 14 Canadians, stuck aboard a disabled cruise ship.

The Costa Allegra was being towed to the Seychelles Islands on Tuesday through waters prowled by pirates.

Cruise ship company officials said the Costa Allegra could reach the main Seychelles island of Mahe by late Wednesday or early Thursday, depending on sea conditions.

The ship lost power Monday after a fire in its generator room that knocked out power to the engines, the lights and air conditioning.

The drama comes six weeks after sister ship Costa Concordia hit a reef and capsized off Italy, killing 25 people and leaving seven missing and presumed dead.

Company officials rushed to play down concerns. The Costa Allegra is "stable and upright," Giorgio Moretti, director of nautical operations for Costa Crociere SpA, told reporters in a conference call.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seeds stored for 'doomsday'

Chick peas, fava beans and other seeds from a facility in Syria are among 25,000 new samples being deposited this week in an Arctic seed vault built to protect food crops from wars and natural disasters.

The latest additions mean that the Svalbard Global Seed Vault — a master backup to the world's other seed banks — has now secured more than 740,000 samples since it opened in a remote Norwegian archipelago in 2008.

Cary Fowler, executive director of the Global Crop Diversity Trust, noted that wars destroyed seed banks in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Another one in Egypt was looted during last year's uprising.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Impregnable?

- The Svalbard Global Seed Vault — sometimes referred to as a doomsday vault — is designed to withstand global warming, earthquakes and even nuclear strikes.

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Pork Hock

$1.39/lb was $1.69/lb

Veg-California Maki

2/$10.00 or $5.49 was $5.49

Green Sweet Pepper

$0.88/lb was $1.29/lb

Fuji Apple (US)

$0.88/lb was $0.99/lb

Peeled Garlic

$0.78/lb was $1.29/lb

Head Lettuce

$0.88/lb was $1.29/lb

PierHarbour Seafood Medley 400g

2/$3.00 or $1.99 was $2.99

Heinz Tomato Ketchup 907g

$2.99 was $3.99

Realemon Lemon Juice 945ml

$1.99 was $2.99

PoenyD Rice Vermicelli 1L

$0.77 was $0.99

Sale Prices from Friday March 2nd - Thursday March 8th, 2012

All items while quantities last • Prices subject to change • We reserve the right to limit quantities • No rain checks

Picture. Screen

▶ A man walks past an advertisement for Apple's iPad 2 on Tuesday in Shanghai, China.

EUGENE HOSHIKO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Apple invite continues tablet tease

Apple is inviting reporters to an event next Wednesday in San Francisco. An image on the invite showing part of an iPad screen suggests the company will announce a new model. Unconfirmed reports have speculated a sharper screen and faster cellular broadband options could be part of the next model.

Google policy might violate EU data rules

Commission also examining whether Google uses its dominance to stop others from entering the EU market

Google's new privacy policy appears to violate the European Union's data protection rules, France's regulator said Tuesday, just two days before the new guidelines are set to come into force.

Google announced its new privacy policy with much fanfare last month. The rules, which are set to come into force on Thursday, regulate how the Web giant uses the enormous amounts of personal data its collects through its search engine, email and other services.

However, the EU's data protection authorities are concerned about the privacy effects of the policy and earlier this month asked French regulator CNIL to investigate them.

"Our preliminary analysis shows that Google's new policy does not meet the requirements of the European Directive on Data Protection," CNIL said in a letter to Google chief executive Larry Page.

The agency said Google's explanation of how it will use the data was too vague and difficult to understand "even for trained privacy professionals"

The new policy makes it easier for Google to combine the data of one person using different services such as the search engine, YouTube or Gmail if she is logged into her Google account. That allows Google to create a broader profile of that user and target advertising based on that person's interests and search history more accurately.

Google argues that combining the data into one profile also makes search results more relevant and allows a user to cross-navigate between different services more easily. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Microsoft to preview Windows 8 software

MARK RIGHTMIRE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

▶ Windows president Steven Sinofsky

Since Microsoft released its Windows operating system in 1985, most of the sequels have been variations on the same theme. Not that it mattered much. Regardless of the software's quality, Microsoft managed to remain at the centre of the personal computing universe.

The stakes are much different as the company puts the finishing touches on Windows 8 — perhaps the most important piece of software the company has designed since co-founder Bill Gates won the contract to build the first operating system for IBM's personal computer in the early 1980s.

A beta version of the revamped operating system will be unveiled Wednesday in Barcelona, nudging Windows 8 a step closer to its anticipated mass market release in the fall. It's the most extensive look at Windows 8 since Microsoft released an early version of the system to developers five months ago. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

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Market moment

PRICES AS OF 5 P.M. TUESDAY

TSX	Dollar	Oil	Natural gas
+ 40.01 (12,740.47)	+ 0.38¢ (100.46¢ US)	- $2.01 US ($106.55 US)	$2.519 US (- 8.4¢ US)
			Gold $1,788.40 US (+ $13.50 US)

Montreal gas prices spike by 14 cents

Energy industry experts are warning that the 14-cent per litre spike in gasoline prices in Montreal on Tuesday is just a taste of the high fuel costs Canadians can expect in the coming months.

The average pump price in Montreal was $1.44 a litre, compared with $1.30 a day earlier, according to price-tracking website Gasbuddy.com. By contrast, the Canadian average only rose a penny to $1.28. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Job prospects remain weak: Report

The Conference Board's forward-looking indicator on labour markets suggests job growth will continue to be modest in the upcoming months.

The think tank's help-wanted index for February shows a mixed climate for job seekers. Prospects appear stronger in the West, but weak throughout much of Ontario.

The index is one of the few forward-looking indicators for jobs in Canada. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Greece passes new round of cuts

Greece's Parliament late on Tuesday approved new cuts in public-sector pensions and government spending required to secure a second package of international rescue loans.

Lawmakers voted 202-80 in favour of cutbacks worth $4.31 billion US and aimed at bringing the 2012 budget back in line with targets. Lawmakers from both parties in Prime Minister Lucas Papademos' coalition, the majority Socialists and the conservatives, backed the legislation.

Earlier, the debt-crippled country's Cabinet decided to apply recent labour reforms, including deep cuts to the minimum wage, retroactively to Feb. 14.

Greece is obliged to adopt a series of austerity measures and reforms before it can receive any funds from its new $174-billion package of rescue loans from other eurozone countries and the International Monetary Fund.

But more than two years of harsh austerity implemented to secure the rescue funds have taken a hefty toll on the recession-bound Greek economy, with unemployment at a record-high 21 per cent. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

PETROS GIANNAKOURIS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ A protesting firefighter holds flares during a demonstration against the Greek government's austerity measures in Athens on Tuesday,

By the numbers

- The newly approved legislation imposes nearly $538 million US in cuts to already depleted pensions.
- Subsidies to the state health-care system will be cut by $673 million, and health-care spending on medicine will fall by $767 million.
- Furthermore, some $538 million will be lopped off defence spending — three-quarters of which will come from purchases.

IF YOU HAVE EVER QUESTIONED THE TERM 'DOWNWARD DOG,' READ ON

JUST SAYIN' ...

PAUL SULLIVAN
METRO

It's generally thought that things beginning in "yog" are good for you.

Like "yogurt" and "yoga" and "Yogi" (Berra, Bear, etc.).

But, it turns out, that's not always the case.

Yoga, for example, lost one of its shining stars recently as yogi John Friend, the founder of Anusara yoga — a kind of feel-good, hang-loose variation on the theme — resigned amid accusations that he felt too good and hung too loose.

Friend, the accusations go, wanted to be more than friends with an unusually large number of his female adherents, ran Wiccan covens featuring a variety of sexual activities, kept employees busy scoring marijuana on his behalf, and at one point even froze his employees' pensions.

"They may have to build a new wing onto The Bad Yogi Hall of Shame to shoehorn John Friend in with fellow philanderers ..."

So much for Mr. Nice Yogi.

The yoga community has been rocked and shocked by this scandal, and more than 50 Anusara teachers have rolled up their mats and left the ashram. But as a number of astute commentators have noticed, this is hardly the first time some guru has stepped out of line. They may have to build a new wing onto The Bad Yogi Hall of Shame to shoehorn John Friend in with fellow philanderers Swami Muktananda, Swami Satchidananda, Swami Amrit Desai and Swami Rama.

The problem may be that yoga (unlike yogurt) is inherently sexy. Hatha yoga, the form most practised around the world, started as a branch of Tantra, which is all about seeking spiritual bliss through sex. The movement to make it safe for a general audience didn't really take hold until the 20th century, so the sex is just under the surface, which should be obvious whenever you find yourself in the "downward dog" pose.

According to a usually reliable source — the New York Times — there is scientific evidence that yoga is inherently sexy. It causes an increase in testosterone (the guru sex hormone), sexy brain waves, and yoga's fast-breathing practice can increase blood flow through the genitals. Like Viagra.

At Rutgers University, researchers have found that yoga can be an effective form of mental masturbation, leading to spontaneous orgasm, or "thinking off." Don't try that with yogurt. (It doesn't work.)

So the real surprise is that there aren't more yoga-based shenanigans. The real surprise, considering the evidence, is that anyone is surprised. Add the power imbalance that often goes with these guru-groupie situations, and you have a surefire recipe for scandal.

Of course, millions of people who practise yoga and eat yogurt aren't looking for kicks. They just want improved flexibility and digestion.

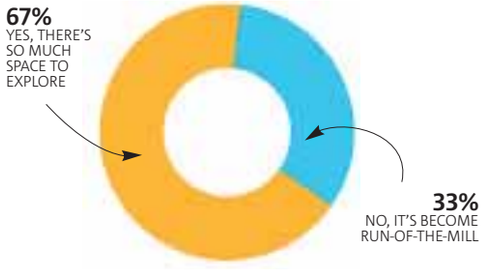
Sex with the guru improves neither.

Read more of Paul Sullivan's columns at metronews.ca/justsaying

Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

Are you excited by the finding of new planets?



Local tweets

- **@webAssistca:** Wow - sounds like a herd of elephants on the roof of 111 Waterloo Street! #ldnont
- **@OMACMark:** Why is it that people that speed through parking lots look at you like you're an idiot when you almost back into them? #ldnont
- **@silentbytes:** There are 50 people in front of me at tim Horton wellington/dundas. Timmy should stop giving away free coffee lol #ldnont
- **@nate_herman:** We need a Starbucks in Pond Mills! There's no way I'm going to Summerside just to get expresso. #LDNont #ghetto-problems
- **@jeffslinky61:** We should keep putting great pressure on #cdnpoli to find answrs in #robocall matter, this should never blow over! #ldnont #stopharper
- **@MsMichelleMM:** So I realize that Brescia and Kings are catholic schools but when the shuttle bus driver blasts sermons I feel quite put off #WesternU
- **@amberfrei:** What a beautiful day to have off! #ldnont

Daily Zoom

LONDON NEWS PICTURES/REX FEATURES

London, U.K., unoccupied

Occupy London camp removed

LONDON, U.K. A time for contemplation and reflection? A supporter of anti-capitalist movement Occupy London meditated in the remains of a partially dismantled tent in London on Tuesday morning. After being camped outside St. Paul's Cathedral for more than four months, demonstrators were evicted by police and bailiffs.

MWN

"The relationships forged during these strange and beautiful four and a half months still have much further to run. This is only the beginning."

STATEMENT FROM WEBSITE OF OCCUPY THE LONDON STOCK EXCHANGE

Britain's protests

- **November 2010:** 55,000 students demonstrate over tuition fees.
- **December 2010:** Protesters target state buildings and damage a car carrying Prince Charles.
- **August 2011:** More than 2,800 people are arrested after a protest over a fatal shooting by police prompted rioting.
- **November 2011:** Occupy movement set up.

GETTY IMAGES

▶ Occupy London activist

metro
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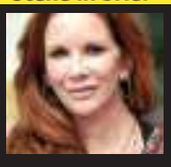
2 scene

Scene in brief



Little House on the Prairie actress Melissa Gilbert, singer Gladys Knight and NFL player Donald Driver will be among the 12 celebrity contestants on the next season of Dancing With the Stars. Other famous faces participating in the show's 14th edition include The View co-host Sherri Shepherd and singer-songwriter Gavin DeGraw.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Meryl Streep donates $10K to school on behalf of hometown star Viola Davis

Films that take a leap

It's not every year we get an extra day to play Some filmmakers have based their movies around the magical Feb. 29 — telling leap year tales of love, ennui and ghosts

IN FOCUS

RICHARD CROUSE
SCENE@METRONEWS.CA

You may not be aware of this, but we're living in a bissextile year. What does that mean? Well, it means today's date, Feb. 29, didn't exist last year. Or the year before that. In fact, you have to flip the calendar back to 2008 to find the last time February had 29 days.

But how to celebrate the year's extra day? If you are Ja Rule, Antonio Sabato Jr., or Tony Robbins, all leap year babies, you could throw yourself a birthday party, but if not, why not rent or download (legally of course!) a movie about those rare years with 366 days?

The Amy Adams rom-com Leap Year is based on an old Irish legend that says that women can propose to men, but only on Feb. 29. She travels to Ireland to ask for her longtime beau's hand, only to get sidetracked in Wales by a tall handsome stranger played by Matthew Goode.

You can likely guess the rest (and if you can't you need to go to romantic comedy school and learn how this works) but the proposal Amy finally gives is much different than the one she originally intended.

Also on the romantic side is The Leap Years, a Chinese film about a woman who meets her lover once every four years on, you guessed it, Feb. 29.

The main character, Li-Ann, is played by three actresses. Beatrice Chia handles all the narration, Wong Li-lin ushers her through her 20s with Joan Chen playing her in middle age.

Rounding out our look at leap year movies are two films with nothing whatsoever to do with romance.

The strange and disturbing Ano Bisiesto was the first Mexican film to win the Camera D'Or award at the Cannes Film Festival.

The story of a lonely woman (Monica del Carmen) who marks off the days on a calendar as she reveals her true self to her lover was called "a blind leap into the void of arthouse cinema du extreme, South of the Border division" by Time Out but is also a deeply felt psychological drama.

On the scary side is The Curse of February 29, a Korean horror film about a blood stained bus ticket, a vengeful ghost and a leap year murder.

Leap years at the movies offers something for everyone — love, ennui and even ghosts!

CONTRIBUTED

▶ Amy Adams stars opposite Matthew Goode in Leap Year, a rom-com about an American who travels to Ireland to propose to her longtime beau on Feb. 29.

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Ontario

Portman married in secret to Millepied

Their jeweller confirms the pair made wedding bands

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

THE WORD

MONICA WEYMOUTH
SCENE@METRONEWS.CA

Natalie Portman is married — and didn't invite us

After showing up to the Academy Awards sporting suspicious rings, it seems that Natalie Portman and Benjamin Millepied did, indeed, get married without telling us. Jeweler Jamie Wolf confirms that the couple — who met on the set of Black Swan and have a son together — created the wedding bands.

"I designed the rings worn by Benjamin Millepied and Natalie Portman," Wolf told Us-Magazine.com.

"They were made with recycled platinum and conflict-free diamonds."

Their eco-friendly jeweler leaked the news?

This, friends, is what we call a rich people problem.

"I designed the rings worn by Benjamin Millepied and Natalie Portman. They were made with recycled platinum and conflict-free diamonds."
JEWELER JAMIE WOLF

▶ Natalie Portman

Becks still after more kids

David and Victoria Beckham may be adjusting to having a fourth child with 7-month-old daughter Harper, but that doesn't mean they're necessarily done procreating.

"We might have one more or two more, you never know," David says, according to Hollyscoop. "We're not thinking about it yet, but if it happens, great. We're enjoying the kids as it is. It's always a thought."

And Victoria, who has complained recently about being exhausted from work and having a newborn, is still up for more.

"I'm not against having more children. I feel lucky having the kids I have and I guess I do like being pregnant," she says. "But not anytime soon. METRO

"We might have one more or two more..."
DAVID BECKHAM

▶ David Beckham and Victoria Beckham.

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3 life

Travel in brief

Organizers of a weeklong celebration of Ontario's burgeoning craft beer industry are hoping to attract visitors from outside the province to partake in the suds-soaked events. Hosted by 29 breweries, the third annual Ontario Craft Beer Week is planning hundreds of beer-themed activities across Ontario. The festival launches on Father's Day, running from June 17 to 23.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Dictionaries, phone app translate Newfoundland lingo

▶ Berlin Cathedral

4 great getaways

1 Berlin, Germany

Always on affordable travel lists, Berlin remains high because, this summer, the new Berlin Bradenburg Airport opens — and you may be able to find promotional flights there. After arriving, you'll find yourself in the East Village of New York, circa 1970s: the punk rockers are actually punk rockers, and the art is bold. By day, take in the history—you can walk along the Berlin Wall, or visit the Berlin Cathedral. By night, relive your techno glory days at places like Berghain/Panorama Bar, one of the best in all of Europe.

2 Paris, France

You already want to go. So go in August. The entire place clears out, and you'll find cheaper hotels, empty cafes and less queueing at museums. According to Woody Allen, walking around at midnight is fun, too.

▶ Paris

3 Nashville, Tenn.

Downtown Nashville is walkable (saving you transportation costs) and hotels are usually under $100 a night. That means you'll have more money to spend on entertainment. This is the place to see the big names (like Willie Nelson) or small ones, at venues such as Mercy Lounge (on hopping Cannery Row).

▶ Nashville

4 Costa Rica

Also known as "the holiday Americans take when they cannot afford Hawaii or the Bahamas," Costa Rica offers adventure without risk. Most locals speak English. It's close to the States. And everything from renting a car to booking a hotel costs far less than neighbouring islands. Yet you still come home with a tan.

SAM CASTONE, METRO WORLD NEWS

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Miami's other 'wild' side

The Travellin' Canadian finds out there's more to Miami than just the night life and beaches

THE TRAVELLIN' CANADIAN

DARREN PARKMAN
TRAVEL@METRONEWS.CA

It turns out there's a little more to Miami than all night parties on south beach and endless days of baking in the sun. During my recent whirlwind jaunt to this sun drenched paradise, I found there is a way to slow the pace just long enough to smell the roses, and avoid those 'Sobe' hangovers. One of the surprising highlights of my visit turned out to be one of those tourist-trap style, stereotypical boat tours of Biscayne Bay.

It was just after arriving at the Miami Marina, I experienced one the coolest up close wildlife encounters ever. Now, I've been lucky enough to get up close with some strange creatures over the years, from web-toed platypuses in Australia, to giant Orangutans in Borneo, but even they were no more impressive than what greeted me right here in the wilds of downtown Miami, no less.

There they were ... milling around the docks ... a real live pair of giant, endangered and very blubbery Manatees. These gentle giants were just lazily floating on the surface, surrounded by downtown skyscrapers.

It was a bit strange to see them out of their natural habitat, as tourists flocked around them taking pictures. My jet boat tour courtesy of Ocean Front adventures turned out to be no less impressive. Dolphins skipped alongside our boat as we passed a strange mix of natural east coast sea life in front of a collection of multimillion dollar mansions. It was a bit weird to behold all this natural beauty as we roared by the waterfront of palaces of celebrities such as Rosie O'Donnell and Madonna, but hey, that's what Miami is all about. Back on dry land, I chose gentler Coconut Grove over wild and crazy south beach, and was glad I did. The vibe in the "Grove" is decidedly more mellow and relaxed, with tons of laid back watering holes filled with friendly locals. Of course I needed to soak up those suds with some great food, and the funky Peacock Garden Café was just the ticket.

There's nothing like a great steak under the stars in the middle of winter. At the end of it all I felt as content as those blubbery manatees.

DARREN PARKMAN/METRO NEWS

▶ Manatees in the 'wilds' of Miami.

DARREN PARKMAN/METRO NEWS

▶ Boat tours are a great way to see the more 'natural' side of Miami.

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Drink of the week

Orange Pear Refresher

This drink will cool your palate and leave a citrus flavour.

- 3 tbsp (45 mL) fresh lemon juice
- 2 tbsp (30 mL) simple syrup
- 3 tbsp (45 mL) pear infused vodka
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) sparkling orange beverage

Fill tall glass with ice and pour in lemon juice, vodka and simple syrup. Top with orange beverage and serve. Garnish with lemon wedge and fresh mint.

SAN PELLEGRINO ARANCIATA

Pasta: The next generation

Put aside granny's traditional meatballs and sauce and try this unique take on a favourite comfort dish The caramelized onions in this pasta are slow cooked to intensify the flavour

MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

This recipe serves eight.

When it comes to weeknight dinners, sometimes the shortest route is the long way around.

Which is to say, letting the slow cooker chug away while you are away often is the fastest and easiest way to get a great dinner on the table during your evening rush.

A common complaint about slow cooker recipes is that too many of them require either too much planning or too much prepping (and sometimes cooking) of ingredients before they go into the cooker.

Busy people want recipes that let them dump stuff in, then walk away and forget about it until dinner.

That's where this simple, but over-the-top-good recipe comes in. You let the slow cooker perfectly caramelize a whole mess of onions while you are at work for the day.

When you come home, you toss those with a few other ingredients and in the time it takes you to boil pasta, you have dinner.

A food processor is the easiest way to slice this volume of onions. And you also could do that the night before, then bag them and toss them in the refrigerator until the next morning so all you have to do is empty them into the slow cooker.

As for the sun-dried tomatoes and arugula, you can improvise according to your family's tastes.

Any vegetables or cooked meats can be substituted. Sausage even could be added to the slow cooker in the morning.

Creamy Caramelized Onion Pasta

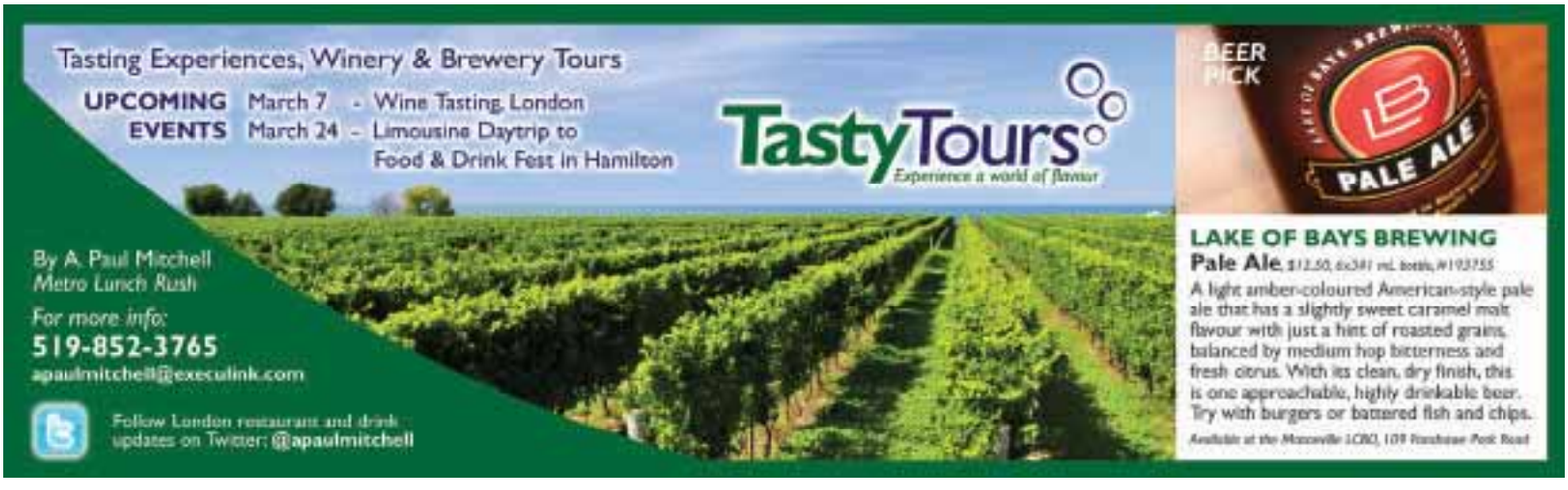
Using your slow cooker to cook onions will give you a delicious and sweet flavour of caramelized onions, and you can do so many at one time! Use them for this creamy pasta dish or make them on their own to create other delicious dishes.

Preparation:

1. In a large slow cooker, combine onions and olive oil. Stir well to coat, then cover and cook on High for 6 to 8 hours or until well browned and caramelized.
2. In large pot of boiling salted water, cook pasta for about 9 minutes or until tender but firm. Drain well and return to pot. Add onions, creme fraiche, arugula and sun-dried tomatoes. Stir over medium heat for about 2 minutes or until arugula just begins to wilt. Season with salt and pepper to taste. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/ ADAPTED BY EMILY RICHARDS (PROFESSIONAL HOME ECONOMIST, COOKBOOK AUTHOR AND TV CELEBRITY CHEF. FOR MORE VISIT, EMILYRICHARDSCOOK.CA)**

Ingredients:

- 1.5 kg (3 lb) onions, thinly sliced
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) olive oil
- 500 g (1 lb) fettuccine pasta
- 1 tub (250 g/8 oz) creme fraiche
- 1 container (142 g/5 oz) baby arugula
- 250 ml (1 cup) thinly sliced sun-dried tomatoes
- Salt and ground black pepper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Pale Ale
A light amber-coloured American-style pale ale that has a slightly sweet caramel malt flavour with just a hint of roasted grains, balanced by medium hop bitterness and fresh citrus. With its clean, dry finish, this is one approachable, highly drinkable beer. Try with burgers or battered fish and chips.

When the chief has changed

You've settled into your role at work when suddenly there's a switch in management Here's how to start over

CHELSEA NEWTON
TALENTEGG.CA

ISTOCK

▶ Your new boss will likely lead your team in a different way as the last. Embrace this new environment.

Many students and recent grads look to their managers to set the tone for their current and future working relationships.

There is comfort in having worked for a manager for a period of time — they know the way you think, they trust in your abilities, and they know the best way to coach you.

So how do you start all over again when you get a new manager?

It's a scary time, but also a great opportunity to grow your skills and be challenged by a new perspective.

It's very important for student and entry-level employees to be open, build credibility, and want the new reporting line to work.

Here are some tips if you have a new manager.

1 **Come in open minded** Your new manager is likely to operate differently than the last, so you should seek to understand their perspective. Don't make snap judgments.

2 **Ask questions** This is tied to not making quick decisions or judgments. Ask questions to seek understanding about changes your new manager is making if they aren't giving you the rationale or background.

3 **Deliver results** Delivering results with a great attitude is the best way to build your personal credibility with a new manager.

4 **Be open and transparent** Open conversation and transparency will work well on both sides to create a strong working relationship right from the get-go. Good luck!

Talking through the transition

If possible, speak with your current manager about the transition they are completing with your new manager before it takes place.

If you had an open relationship with your previous manager, you can help shape this discussion by highlighting key things that really work in your current relationship.

If your current manager is unable to have a transition with your new manager, take matters into your own hands. Put together a "get to know me" email with your job description, org chart of your team (if applicable), previous performance review, and current targets and goals. Book a meeting with your new manager to get to know each other, walk through your current work load and review your goals.

CHELSEA NEWTON IS THE DIRECTOR OF TALENT ACQUISITION AT MOSAIC SALES SOLUTIONS. HER EXPERTISE IS IN HIRING YOUNG ADULTS AND SHE HAS BUILT CAMPUS RECRUITING PROGRAMS IN OVER 12 COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD, INCLUDING CANADA, THE UNITED STATES, CHINA AND RUSSIA.
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4 sports

JOHN GRIESHOP/GETTY IMAGES

▶ Rick Nash scores a goal against Red Wings goalie Joey MacDonald on Tuesday night.

‘That was the best thing for the team’

Nash says he asked for trade from Blue Jackets to help with rebuilding

Rick Nash had difficulty sleeping on Monday night, after it became known that he had asked the Columbus Blue Jackets to trade him.

After spending nine seasons as the face of a losing franchise, Nash is now uncertain of the reaction from fans who have idolized him but now might see him as just another opportunist.

“I’m not too sure what to expect,” he said Tuesday in his first public comments after it was revealed he had asked to be dealt. “I’ve been with these fans my whole career here. I love them no matter what. They’re a great fan base, loyal. They’ve been patient with this organization and with this team. No matter what the reception is I’ll always have a soft spot in my heart for our fans.”

$7.5M

Rick Nash is signed through the 2014-15 season and will make between $7.5 million and $7.9 million each year.

General manager Scott Howson first mentioned Nash’s trade request on Monday, shortly after he failed to trade the four-time All-Star.

“He obviously wants a change,” said Howson, who was first approached by Nash in January about being moved.

Most people had thought the team, with the worst record by far in the NHL at 18-37-7, had first floated the possibility of dealing its best player. So it was a shocker that it was Nash, who has long said how much he loves Columbus and the Blue Jackets, who wanted out.

Nash was adamant — repeating the same phrase several times — that he not only wanted to help his own career but also help the organization that drafted him No. 1 and helped him become one of the top stars in the NHL.

“I was informed by management that there was a rebuild, a reshape, in the team and I personally felt I could be a huge part of that towards bringing assets in,” he said. “In my view, that was the best thing for the team, the organization, and personally for my career.”

One major problem will be building a team around a captain who has already said he’d prefer to be elsewhere.

He said he wanted to remain as captain, at least for the final 20 games of this season. Team officials gave no indication that he would lose the “C” on his jersey. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Urine collector defends himself

The person who collected Ryan Braun’s urine sample that tested positive for elevated levels of testosterone said he followed the collection program’s protocol.

Dino Laurenzi Jr. issued a statement Tuesday confirming he handled the sample submitted following a playoff game on Oct. 1.

He says he has been a collector for Comprehensive Drug Testing since 2005 and has taken more than 600 samples for Major League Baseball’s drug-testing program.

“At no point did I tamper in any way with the samples,” Laurenzi said.

Laurenzi’s name emerged last week after the NL MVP’s 50-game suspension was overturned, making Braun the first big leaguer to successfully challenge a drug-related penalty in a grievance.

Laurenzi said he stored Braun’s sample in his basement in accordance with CDT’s protocol because there was “no FedEx office located within 50 miles of Miller Park that would ship packages that day or Sunday.”

Braun, however, has said at least five FedEx locations within 5 miles were open until 9 p.m. and there also was a 24-hour location.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sports in brief

News that hockey great Jean Beliveau was hospitalized following a stroke has prompted an outpouring of affection and get-well wishes for the legendary centreman, beloved as much for his gracious personality as his graceful skating.

Even the prime minister wished Beliveau well.

“Mr. Beliveau is a great Canadian and a remarkable ambassador for our national sport,” Stephen Harper said in an emailed statement.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Scan code for more sports news.

LEAFS LOSE TO PANTHERS

Fans call for Wilson to be fired

Another season is slipping away from the Toronto Maple Leafs.

Mike Santorelli scored twice Tuesday as the Florida Panthers handed the sinking Maple Leafs a 5-3 loss, an all-too-familiar outcome for fans in Toronto.

Loud chants of “Fire Wilson!” — directed at coach Ron Wilson — went up twice during the third period as the Leafs lost for the ninth time in 10 games, including all four on a disheartening homestand. Toronto sits four points out of playoff position in the Eastern Conference but it is showing no signs of pulling out of a tailspin.

Marcel Goc, Jason Garrison and Stephen Weiss also scored for Florida (30-20-12). Jose Theodore added 28 saves.

Phil Kessel, Nikolai Kulemin and Joffrey Lupul replied for the Maple Leafs (29-27-7).

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Motor and battery

The 107-kilowatt (143-horsepower) motor directs its 184 pound-feet of torque to the front wheels for a maximum 134 km/h through a single-speed transmission.

The lithium-ion battery pack is located beneath and behind the rear seat that, due to its bulk, cuts down on the hatchback's available stowage space while adding significant heft.

Cabin

The cabin features considerable advanced technology. There's a special version of the MyFord Touch information system that includes battery-charging state, expected remaining range and how much energy is being consumed by the vehicle's accessories.

There's more. At the end of every trip, the display screen shows total distance driven and the additional distance gained through regenerative braking. Put simply, when you brake, the battery pack is being charged.

Range

To maintain the battery pack at its optimum operating temperature, Ford uses a liquid heating and cooling system to help the car deliver on its 160-kilometre-range claim — maximum range, not average — but that will still require a light touch of the pedal and avoiding excessive use of electrical accessories such as the climate control.

And who knows what kind of range you'll get in a good old-fashioned Canadian winter.

▶ There's no explanation why the battery pack is in the back and the charge port is at the front, other than it's close to the driver's door and in plain sight.

Focusing on an electric

MALCOLM GUNN
DRIVE@METRONEWS.CA
WHEELBASE MEDIA

Trading fossil-fuel fill-ups for electrical current flowing from a charging station is still a new idea, but Ford is providing a way for you to get in on the ground floor.

Unlike the Chevrolet Volt, Nissan Leaf and Mitsubishi iMiEV that are all proprietary designs, Ford developed the new Focus Electric using the existing Focus platform and body, although a distinctive nose and a charging port door on the driver's-side front fender are dead giveaways as to the car's unique propulsion. And it's that system — moreover, the way it charges — that makes the Focus Electric unique.

Ford claims that a full charge will require three to four hours, or about half the time required by the benchmark Nissan Leaf.

This is due to circuitry designed for higher throughput as opposed to significant differences in battery design. Three hours is a relatively short amount of time that also requires a 240-volt charging station. Otherwise, you can count on a lengthy 18-20 hours from a standard 120-volt outlet using a cord that's included, which is clearly not the way to go for busy or impatient people. A quick calculation puts the cost of driving 100 kilometres at about $2.

That's about half of what even the best hybrid can do and there's no tailpipe emissions at all with the Focus Electric.

5 drive

By comparison

Nissan Leaf
Base price: $40,400
Roomy hatchback gets high marks for functionality, if not for elegance.

Chevrolet Volt
Base price: $43,000
Backup gasoline generator makes this electric the most practical.

Mitsubishi iMiEV
Base price: $34,700
Small, good range, OK top speed and the cheapest big-name electric.
WHEELBASE MEDIA

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Used Aveo will appeal mostly on price

SECOND GEAR

JUSTIN PRITCHARD
DRIVE@METRONEWS.CA

The Chevrolet Aveo has been given the axe to clear the way for the new Chevrolet Sonic — meaning the automaker's former entry-level model is now fully into the used vehicle marketplace.

The last generation Aveo was on sale from 2004 to 2011 and available in hatchback or sedan variants. Look for features like folding rear seats, remote access, power accessories and cruise control.

Note that the LS models were more basic, while LT models were more loaded.

2004-11 Chevrolet Aveo/Aveo5

Engine

All Aveo models got a 1.6-litre, 103-horsepower four-cylinder driving the front wheels via a four-speed automatic or five-speed manual.

What owners like

Most Aveo owners speak highly about surprising levels of interior roominess, low operating costs, relative fuel efficiency and responsive steering.

What owners dislike

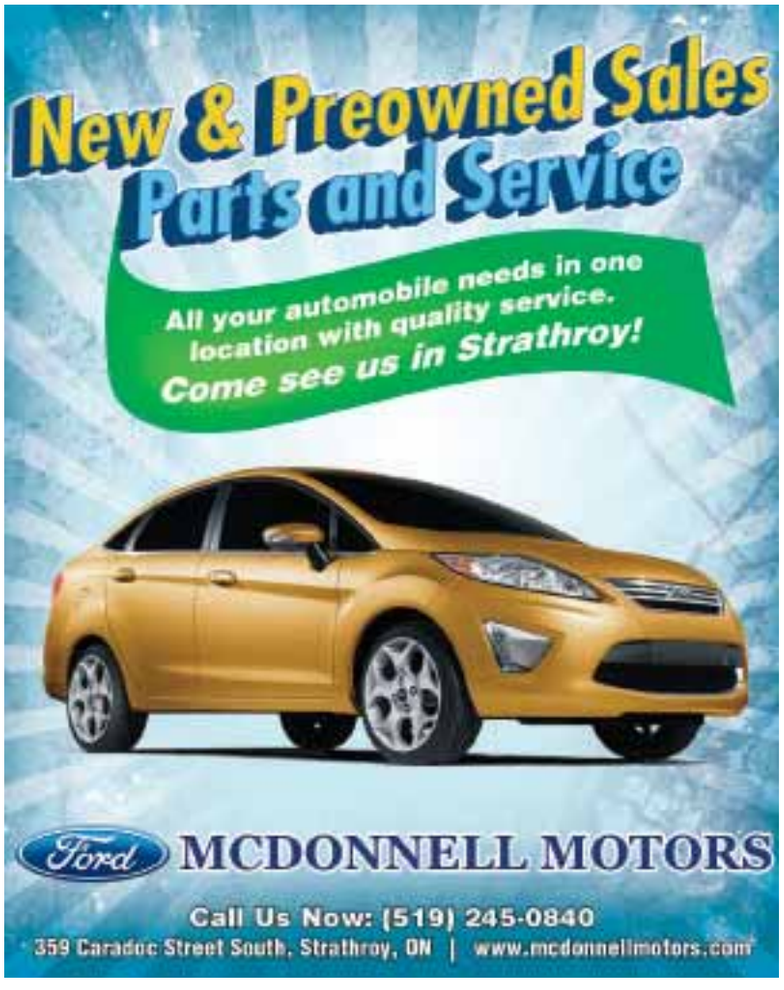
Cheap interior trim, a light or "flimsy" feel, soft suspension, cupholder size and placement, and easily-chipped paint round out the most common complaints.

Common issues

Numerous instances of broken timing belts have been reported by owners online — so be sure the timing belt on the model you're considering isn't overdue for a change. If it snaps and fails while you're driving, your trip will stop dead in its tracks. A timing belt is a part that needs to be changed pre-emptively ahead of failure to keep your engine running. Make sure the automatic transmission is easy to shift into and out of gear, too.

Verdict

Aveo is far from the most reliable compact car in its segment — though relatively inexpensive repairs, cheap operating costs and low resale values will make it an affordable option worth considering for low-mileage drivers.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Easing the 'anxiety' of driving electric cars

DRIVING FORCE

JIL McINTOSH
DRIVE@METRONEWS.CA

While electric vehicles may hold a promise of a gasoline-free future, they are not without their drawbacks, including the need to schedule their battery recharging. A new smartphone application being developed by researchers at the University of Windsor could take much of the hassle out of that.

Not only does the app monitor the car's battery charge, but it will search out charging stations and even work with your datebook to optimize your driving schedule.

"We wanted to take out some of the driver's anxiety," says Kemal Tepe, an associate professor and director of the university's Wireless Communications and Information Processing Lab.

"We tell you how far you can go with this vehicle in the current state of the charge, but the uniqueness of the application is to match the charging schedule to your calendar."

Using the driver's appointments entered into the smartphone's calendar, and with the battery charge information from the car, the app will map out the destinations, offering the most efficient routes or even suggesting rescheduling appointments around the car's charging requirements.

"This application combines several applications and information and then processes it," Tepe says.

"Let's say you come to work and have an urgent meeting in the afternoon. You enter it into your schedule, which ties it into the smartphone, and the application will grab this information and tell you if it has enough charge to get there, or not enough."

Tepe says the app could be optimized to the electrical grid to identify the least-expensive charging times.

While it would prioritize lower-cost electricity, it would also monitor upcoming appointments and, if necessary, start when needed to have the battery charged by the time the driver has to leave.

The app could also reduce the number of times the car is plugged in.

"You have a limited number of charging cycles," Tepe says, adding that it could be up to 2,000 times, "but every time you charge it, you are counting down."

Even though you may stop for lunch next to a charging station, "the app will tell you that you can make one day's trips on that charge, so you don't need to waste one of those charging opportunities and it will tell you to skip the charge," he says.

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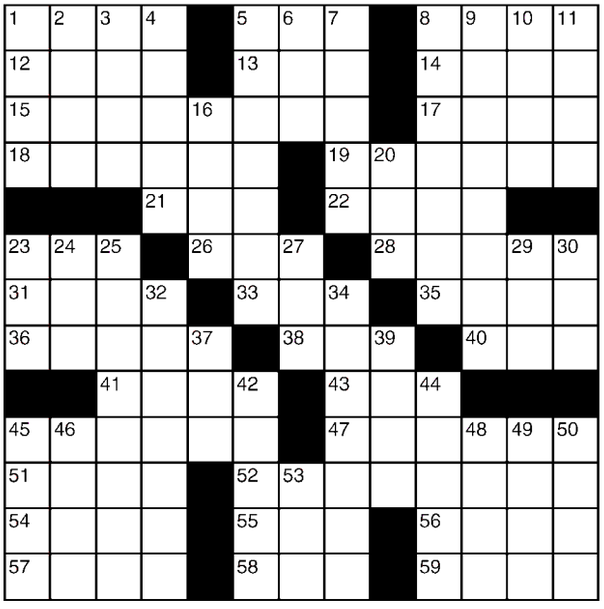
Crossword



Across

1 Syringe, for short
5 TiVo, for example
8 iPhone downloads
12 Really long time
13 Midafternoon, on a sundial
14 Crooner Jerry
15 Firm adherent to a cause
17 Ontario neighbor
18 Scabbard
19 Stocking holder
21 Apiece
22 Kill
23 Swiss mountain
26 Treasure seeker's aid
28 Spry
31 Water vessel
33 "Golly!"
35 Oklahoma city
36 Hannah Montana portrayer Miley
38 Pismire
40 Bygone Pontiac muscle car
41 Walked (on)
43 Stomach
45 Actress Headly
47 Frightened
51 Continental coin
52 Bit
54 Have coming
55 Peculiar
56 Reedy
57 Seeks restitution
58 Pirouette pivot
59 Spud's buds

Down

1 Chance occurrences
2 "Why not?"
3 Sweat outlet
4 Available
5 Symbol of limpness
6 By way of
7 "Lord of the —"
8 Par
9 Whooping it up
10 Ballet bend
11 Prognosticator
16 Detail
20 Chicken — king
23 "The View" network
24 Myrna of Hollywood
25 Path-filled garden
27 Shooter ammo
29 Torched
30 Tokyo's old name
32 Strong likes
34 Fencing call
37 Bart, to Homer
39 Clump of grass
42 Station
44 Hackneyed
45 The Bee —
46 Hawaiian feast
48 Needing liniment
49 Nastase of tennis lore
50 Lairs
53 Fuss

▶ Yeterday's answer

W	A	L	L	■	V	E	G	■	C	L	A	P
A	L	I	A	■	I	D	A	■	A	I	D	E
V	A	M	P	I	R	E	S	■	M	E	A	N
E	R	E	■	M	E	N	■	S	P	U	R	N
■	■	■	■	Q	U	O	■	D	E	F	■	■
B	O	G	U	S	■	P	R	A	I	S	E	D
A	R	I	A	■	J	O	Y	■	R	O	M	E
T	A	N	G	L	E	D	■	B	E	L	O	W
■	■	■	M	A	T	■	H	R	S	■	■	■
R	E	M	I	X	■	D	U	O	■	E	M	U
H	A	I	R	■	H	O	T	W	I	R	E	S
E	S	N	E	■	A	R	C	■	V	I	S	E
A	Y	E	S	■	M	A	H	■	Y	E	A	R

Sudoku

5			3		2			9
4	7	1				3	2	8
		2	9		3	7		
3								2
		9	4		5	6		
9	2	6				8	7	4
1			8		7			5

How to play

Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Yesterday's answer ▶

9	8	7	2	3	6	4	1	5
4	1	3	7	8	5	9	6	2
2	6	5	9	1	4	8	3	7
1	3	2	4	5	7	6	9	8
6	7	4	3	9	8	2	5	1
8	5	9	6	2	1	7	4	3
7	9	8	5	4	3	1	2	6
3	4	6	1	7	2	5	8	9
5	2	1	8	6	9	3	7	4

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You can now post your kiss, and read even more kisses, at metronews.ca/kiss.

my everlasting love, prince charming, My sweet darling, Ti amo, Je t'aime, Wo Ai Ni, I love you always, forever and ever. Mi Manchi every day and every night! Sweetheart, take good care of yourself, just a kiss on yr sweet lips my love, you are my everything, you are my destiny... See you always in my dreams tonite and every nite... **YOUR ETERNAL LOVE, STRONG N FAITHFUL PRINCESS**

boy at the salad bar
Hey you! That's right. I don't even know your name but i've been admiring you from a far :(I work in the store across from yours , so please look over sometime and just say hi ! :) **GIRL NEXT DOOR**

Honeypot
To my brand new husband, I love you and I am so happy to be on this wonderful journey with you. Thank you for everything.
HONEY BALL

Today's horoscope

For today's crossword answers and for expanded horoscopes, visit metronews.ca

♈ Aries March 21-April 20
Today's good news will make you feel a lot better about your financial situation. Always be positive.

♉ Taurus April 21-May 21
What happens today will inspire you to give a project you have been on the verge of ending another go. It can be made to work.

♊ Gemini May 22-June 21
What you see or hear today will remind you that compared to other people, you are quite lucky.

♋ Cancer June 22-July 22
Do you believe in yourself? The only thing that is holding you back, Cancer, is the idiotic idea that you are not good enough. You are.

♌ Leo July 23-Aug.23
There's no point trying to predict how people are going to act because they are on a completely different wavelength to you.

♍ Virgo Aug. 24- Sept. 22
You seem very positive in your outlook at the moment, which is good, but you still need to back it up with hard work.

♎ Libra Sept. 23-Oct. 23
Good news regarding your money situation will cheer you up, but it's only a short-term development.

♏ Scorpio Oct. 24-Nov. 22
Listen to what friends have to tell you today, even if it isn't what you were hoping to hear.

♐ Sagittarius Nov. 23-Dec. 21
Do something out of the ordinary today, something even your friends think is outrageous.

♑ Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 20
You will see something that everyone else has missed. Act quickly and turn it to your advantage.

♒ Aquarius Jan. 21-Feb. 18
News from afar may not exactly delight you but neither is it the end of the world. Keep things in perspective and look for ways to benefit.

♓ Pisces Feb. 19-March 20
Someone you meet on your travels could become the most important person in your life over the next few months. SALLY BROMPTON

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DAVID SMITH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

MICHAEL CONROY/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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